

SECTION 4

**MANAGEMENT
CONTROLS
AND PROCESSES**

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS AND PROCESSES

FEATURED IN THIS SECTION

4.1	STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK	1
4.2	STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS	4
4.3	ARCHITECTURAL PLANNING AND EXECUTION	5
4.4	APPLICATION LIFE CYCLE STANDARD	7
4.5	IT PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM	8
4.6	HIPAA COMPLIANCE PROGRAM EXECUTION	10

SECTION 4...

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS AND PROCESSES

4.1 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Creating the CIO Organization

In FY1994 the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors created a citizen Information Technology Advisory Group (ITAG) to study the use and management of Information Technology (IT) by the County government. The ITAG was composed of eight private sector executives from Fairfax County based companies. Two committees supported the ITAG, one made up of staff from their own corporate organizations and the other comprised of County Staff.

The work of the ITAG resulted in the creation of the Department of Information Technology (DIT). By consolidating several separate County organizations already involved with programming, infrastructure, operations, telecommunications, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), mapping and technical training, the Department of Information Technology was formed. The new DIT also included centralized resources for system security, standards, technology planning and administration.

The ITAG further recommended that:

- The County create a Chief Information Officer (CIO) position to oversee DIT and technology Countywide
- The CIO should report directly to the County Executive as a Deputy County Executive level position
- IT be treated as an investment and given consistent funding annually
- The CIO be responsible for IT planning County-wide and the expenditure of major IT project funds
- The County create a funding mechanism to ensure IT employees are trained properly and their skills are kept up to date
- An annual IT plan is written to detail IT direction, projects and budgets.

When ITAG recommended the technology modernization fund, it recommended funding of approximately \$20 million per year. This fund provides money for the

software, hardware and services included in the County's major IT projects. The modernization fund represents the County's enterprise wide and key departmental projects, which are closely tied to business process improvement and strategic goals.

ITAG also recognized that larger County departments would still need to retain some IT staff in addition to utilizing central DIT resources and that some projects would be better handled by the department rather than DIT. For these departments DIT would serve as a consultant, mentor or project partner. But departmental IT standards, planning and budgeting would still follow the direction of the CIO to ensure consistency and investment value.

Based on the initial ITAG recommendations, the following initiatives have been implemented successfully:

- *centralization of the major IT functions for the County (FY1995)*
- *creation of a CIO function (FY1995)*
- *standardization of technology investments across the County (FY1995)*
- *creation of a technology modernization fund (FY1996)*
- *annual technology project review as part of the budget process (FY1995)*
- *funding for technology training (FY1996)*
- *project steering committees, formal project reporting and governance (FY1996)*
- *creation of a permanent private sector advisory group (FY1998)*
- *creation of an internal Senior Management IT steering committee (FY1999)*
- *project manager certification (FY1999)*
- *creation of an enterprise technology architecture committee (FY2001)*
- *creation of an IT Investment Portfolio management position in DIT (FY2002)*

- *creation of an enterprise technology architecture function in DIT (FY2002)*
- *development of strategic planning alignment process (FY2003)*

The Role of the CIO

The County's Chief Information Officer (CIO) is responsible for the overall management of Information Technology resources. The Board of Supervisors has broadened the role of the CIO since the position was created. Not only is the CIO responsible for the Department of Information Technology, the CIO is also responsible for a broad range of information related departments. The Fairfax County Library and the Department of Cable Communications and Consumer Protection and the Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA) Compliance Office also report directly to the CIO. The CIO's direct responsibility for information spans books, television, technology, consumer protection and the management of documents.

To assist the CIO the Board of Supervisors in FY1998 created a permanent private sector group called the Information Technology Policy Advisory Committee (ITPAC). The group is made up of 10 members appointed directly by the Board of Supervisors and five members that are recommended to the Board by the Federation of Civic Associations, School Board, Northern Virginia Technology Council, League of Women Voters and the Chamber of Commerce respectively.

The ITPAC meets monthly to review the County's technology projects, plans and direction and endorses the annual technology spending plan to the Board of Supervisors during budget review and deliberations. The ITPAC serves as the Board of Directors to the CIO, providing advice, experience and support for the IT program.

The Senior IT Steering Committee assists and advises the CIO. This group includes the County Executive, Chief Financial Officer, Deputy County Executives, Director of the Department of Information Technology and Director of the Department of Management and Budget. The committee gets additional input from the county's Senior Management Team made up of all agency heads. The committee meets monthly to look at specific IT initiatives, opportunities and issues, sets the County's IT strategy based on the Board of

Supervisors' direction, and approves the annual IT investment plan which is delivered by the CIO to the ITPAC for its endorsement.

Project Prioritization and Execution

The Senior IT Steering Committee establishes the funding priorities for technology projects. The priorities for projects started in FY 1999 through FY 2003 provided one or more of the following benefits:

- ▶ Convenient Access to Information and services
- ▶ A High Level of Responsiveness to Customer requirements
- ▶ Management of County Information assets
- ▶ Management of County Technology assets
- ▶ Management of County Human Resource assets

For FY 2004, based on global changes in social and economic paradigm shifts, new priorities were adopted:

- ▶ Mandated Requirements
- ▶ Leveraging of Prior Investments
- ▶ Enhancing County Security
- ▶ Improving Service Quality and Efficiency
- ▶ Ensuring a current and supportable Technology Infrastructure

The initial project recommendations are submitted by the County's departments as part of the annual budget process. County staff implemented a two-phase approach to assist in the preparation and evaluation of information technology project proposals submitted for FY2004 funding and to support the following objectives:

- *submission of viable projects: minimize the rejection of projects that may be beneficial to County business conceptually, however lack substantive information in critical project areas such as staffing plans, technical architecture, project deliverables and benefits;*
- *ensure that proposed project timeframes, areas of responsibility and funding accurately reflect County procurement, budget and existing IT project commitments, as well as to clearly identify the impact of the project on agency business and technical staff, and agency operations;*
- *identify potential savings by utilizing exiting County-owned technologies or by jointly reviewing similar individual project requests to minimize IT software and hardware duplication and leverage technology investments already made;*

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Quality and Innovative Information Technology Solutions

- *ensure that proposed project schedules are feasible, and/or that ongoing projects are within scope and budget, and are on schedule*

Early in the process, agencies are requested to submit both a business and technical viability analysis for each proposed project. The business analysis, reviewed by staff from the Department of Management and Budget (DMB), includes such factors as business objectives, return on investment (including cost savings, cost avoidance, enhanced revenue, non-quantifiable service benefits, staff savings and staffing efficiencies), indicators to be used to measure success, estimated costs, business related risks and alternatives to the proposed project.

The technical analysis, reviewed by staff from the Department of Information Technology (DIT), includes such factors as proposed system architecture and its compatibility with the County's Technical Architecture Standards, impact on existing systems, data conversion and electronic interface requirements, and staffing requirements for development, enhancement and maintenance of the project.

After review by DMB and DIT, recommendations and suggestions for improvement are made to the project sponsors. The final project proposals are submitted, interviews are conducted and DIT and DMB senior management make final reviews. Funding consideration is guided by the five information technology priorities established by the IT Senior Steering Committee.

From this interview process, a recommendation for project funding is created. The Senior IT Steering Committee and ITPAC review the recommendation, any revisions are made and the ITPAC writes a letter endorsing the proposed projects and funding to the Board of Supervisors. The Board makes the final decision on funding based on this endorsement.

As stated previously, IT funding in the modernization budget represents the strategic and enterprise-wide initiatives for the County. If during the project review process project is identified that is not strategic, does not have enterprise wide benefits, but does benefit a single department or County function, funding may be placed into departmental budgets. The department can then use these funds to do the project internally with exiting staff or contract for services if necessary. They can even request that DIT do the project if that is the best solution. Departmental projects must still follow the established IT standards, methodology and

architecture requirements and DIT is usually involved as an advisor at a minimum to ensure compliance.

Once projects are approved for funding, a steering committee is created for each project. This committee can vary in size, based on the dollar value and the strategic importance of the project. A project manager is selected from the department sponsoring the project and a technical project manager is assigned from DIT and/or the user agency's technical group if one exists.



Project managers are required to hold regular meetings and report progress and issues. All projects need to follow the County's standards and project methodology as defined by the CIO in the IT standards. Formal architecture standards have been developed that provide further guidance to the project managers. This process is managed by the IT Portfolio Manager in DIT.

The County formally certifies project managers. DIT has created a project manager certification course, which certifies project managers to lead projects at different dollar thresholds. Once certified and assigned to an approved project, the project manager's salary may be adjusted from his/her position of record to reflect the level of project responsibility and dollars that is involved. The certification focuses on project reporting and administration, contract negotiation and management, task planning and other topics. Certification is also required for technical project managers.

All of these elements...

- *CIO position at the Deputy County Executive level reporting to the County Executive*
- *private sector and internal County board of directors for the CIO*
- *planning and review of technology investments county-wide*

- *focus on standards, training and certification*
- *collaboration between agencies and DIT*
- *portfolio management*
- *skilled project management*

...work together to create an enterprise wide process and focus for IT in Fairfax County. The process is inclusive of all departments, it ensures that there is a high level champion for IT and that as solutions are chosen they match the goals of the enterprise as a whole.

In any organization, a wide range of business processes and practices support all information technology projects directly or indirectly. They are integral to both the development and the delivery of flexible, cost-effective and reliable solutions. The following sections provide a brief description of three of these processes, which

have been crucial to the successful implementation of information technology solutions in the County's service environment. These processes are:

- *Strategic Planning Process*
- *Information Technology Architectural Planning and Execution*
- *IT Investment Portfolio Management*
- *Application Life Cycle Standards; and*
- *Information Technology Project Management Program*

Each process is briefly discussed in terms of its origins, its larger operational context, the primary functions performed, principal business benefits achieved and future directions.

4.2 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

As a part of the County's strategic thinking and planning process, DIT assembled a Strategic Planning team of staff across the IT organizational specialties to conduct activities to gather input on values, needs, and expectations related to the future provision of Information Technology solutions and services. The team was organized into external communications team, internal communications team, and IT research and development team. The result of the efforts of this initiative will compliment the annual process for development of the IT Plan and operations of the Department of Information Technology for a comprehensive enterprise-wide IT approach, offering a more strategic view of G2G, business integration for cross-cutting county initiatives, e-government opportunities and industry and economic trends; and, how these align with county priorities and resources.

The 'external team' was charged to engage dialogue with the agencies, DIT's customers and partners. The purpose of the 'internal' portion of the environmental scan was to gather useful information from staff about strategic planning opportunity areas. The key questions were how are we doing, what we should be, and how we should position for the future. The team also used this opportunity to talk to staff and received valuable feedback which helped define our vision for the future and values, as well as feedback about DIT customer service. Through the data collection efforts, several

central themes were extracted to be addressed in the strategic plan.

The team conducted three internal focus groups at the Group Decision Support Center (GDSC) which were attended by 45 people, or approximately 15% of departmental staff. Information was gathered on DIT's desired future, values, ideal service delivery, and communication with DIT customers and staff and to identify DIT strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). Based on input from the groups, the team developed a survey that everyone in DIT was asked to complete. The purpose of the survey was to both validate what the team heard in the focus groups and to give people the opportunity to add additional ideas and perspective. Roughly 50% of staff, or 146 people, responded to the survey. The survey results and comments validated the findings from the three focus groups.

The team also held four focus group sessions conducted at the GDSC, targeting our customer agency IT specialists and managers. An Intranet web survey, targeting respondents from the end user community or those with an IT role within their respective agencies, was published on the Infoweb for 13 days. Lastly, a special interview session was held, with the Criminal Justice — Information Technology (CJ-ITECH) Committee members and a representative from the Fire

and Rescue Department, to identify key issues and initiatives that directly impact the County's public safety and criminal justice agencies. A total of 274 participants/ respondents participated in at least one of the aforementioned data collection methods.

In addition, information was sought from agency IT professionals and users on the following broad topics:

- *existing service and support levels,*
- *suggestions for improvement in specified service and support areas,*
- *current business needs and possible technology solutions*
- *future business needs and possible technology solutions.*



Preliminary Findings:

The alignment phase and results of technology innovation analysis will result in a final report, which will support the IT planning process for FY 2005. The findings from the customer focus groups, web survey, and Public Safety interview were organized into eight themes: leadership, service delivery, learning and growth, communication, consultant/partnership, resource management, environmental changes and technology advances. Within each theme, an analysis based on identifying achievements, areas for improvements, new opportunities, and anticipated challenges was done to group like com-

ments together in accordance with the analysis method of pinpointing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

4.3 ARCHITECTURAL PLANNING AND EXECUTION

DIT is faced with the constant challenge of aligning the County's information technology strategy with the agencies' business requirements — then quickly realigning the technology infrastructure when the business requirements change. Fast changing business requirements can outstrip the capabilities of the IT infrastructure. Whether it takes an upgrade, an enhancement or a completely new system to meet the new business requirement, it is DIT's job to deliver the solution — on time and within budget.

Disparate decisions and infrastructure investments can easily create a complex and fragile computing environment that is intolerant of change. Given the rapid pace of today's business innovation, no agency can afford to be locked into an environment so adverse to change.

IT Architectural Planning shows how to break out of this loop by creating an adaptive architecture that "engineers out" everything that inhibits change, while

"engineering in" a high tolerance for the unanticipated. Specifically, an IT Architectural Plan maximizes the effectiveness of IT, while minimizing the risk associated with IT investments, and sets a clear direction for the future acquisition and deployment of information technology in Fairfax County.

IT Architecture introduces a set of architectural best practices to guide IT in the process of designing a flexible technical infrastructure, which frees the organization to provide an IT environment that will meet business requirements and focus on the real business issues.

Execution of the IT Architecture Strategic Plan insures the following benefits:

- Better aligning IT assets with business goals and creating a shared enterprise-wide vision
- Supercharging the infrastructure with leading-edge technologies and "on-demand" capacity

- Developing a consistent framework for future technology decisions
- Making more effective IT investments and lower total cost of ownership (TCO)
- Resolving emerging business problems while leveraging the existing technology investment
- Reducing database, hardware and application software redundancy, thereby providing the potential to reduce the cost of IT
- Promoting data sharing between agencies and across IT platforms; improving interoperability and the potential for agency resource sharing.

In FY 2001, a Strategic Architecture Committee composed of DIT and technical and/or business representatives of county departments was formalized. Committee members selected had knowledge of contemporary information technology (IT) direction and the role IT plays in the vision or mission of their agency.

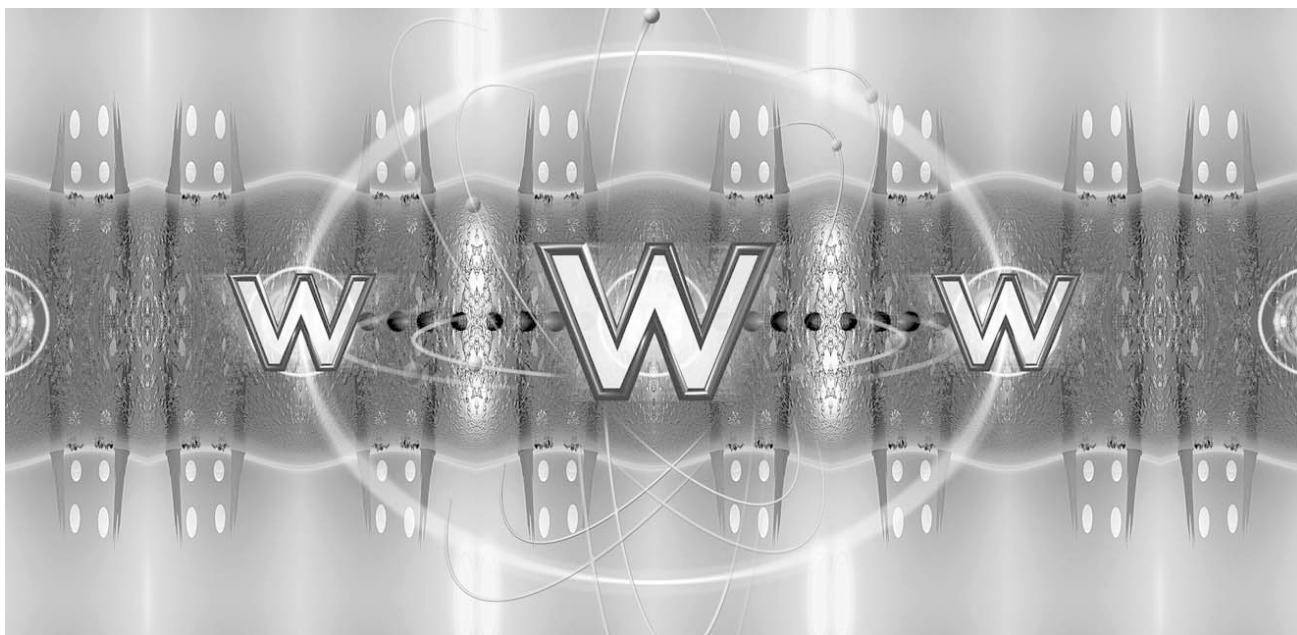
The purpose of the Architecture Committee is to address information technology (IT) architecture issues Countywide and to propose IT architectural goals, standards and guidelines for consideration in implementing IT projects and initiatives throughout the County. The Committee also works with County departments to ensure that there is participation and inclusion in decisions that affect the annual IT planning process. Responsibilities of the Committee include:

- Providing information technology architectural

leadership to Fairfax County Government in supporting the on-going development of a strong, flexible, interoperable and secure technology environment.

- Ensuring that there is an integrated view between the County's architectural direction and technology initiatives and implementation plans.
- Working closely with DIT and other County IT groups to identify IT architectural issues related to business needs and IT projects, and proposing approaches to address them.
- Proposing IT architectural plans and standards to DIT, the CIO and the Senior IT Steering Committee for Countywide implementation.

During the latter part of FY2002, a new organizational unit was created within DIT to provide oversight of all County architecture and infrastructure standards, policies, and directions. The responsibilities of the new group, the Architecture and Planning Division, includes application development architecture, infrastructure and information architectures, security architecture, emerging technology, process and data modeling, integration, standards and policy enforcement, and ALCS compliance. This is extremely important and valuable given that the technology pendulum is again swinging towards development and enterprise application integration as a vital function, while as new technologies and platforms are incorporated into the overall architecture framework.



4.4 APPLICATION LIFE CYCLE STANDARD

The Need for the Standards

In 1987, the County published Documentation Standards. These were guidelines for documenting the development and implementation of mainframe applications. The original standards included written means of conveying to mainframe operations staff information about the planned application, to allow those staff to plan capacity and other resources required to place the application into production.

The Documentation Standards stood the test of time. However, the technology used by DIT in developing applications has changed dramatically, as has the technology on which applications are running. As the original standards were applicable to a declining number of new applications, a major overhaul of these standards was initiated in 1998. The effort concentrated on combining much of the original content that applied to legacy, mainframe based applications, with new application development techniques and application architectures using the newer and emerging technologies.

These technologies include, but are not limited to, client server; WEB/Internet based applications, wireless technologies, and data architectures.

Purpose of the Application Life Cycle Standards

The purpose of Application Life Cycle Standards (ALCS) is to provide a guide to documentation for all development and enhancement projects and a checklist to assist in ensuring projects are complete. These Standards apply to all applications developed for use by Fairfax County Government. These include, but are not limited to, mainframe-based applications, client server; WEB/Internet based applications, wireless technologies, and data architectures. All staff and contractors developing and maintaining applications for County Government must comply with the Standards. In order to assist non-technical staff in using them, a glossary is included on the Web site.

Another value implicit in the ALCS is the importance of using the expertise of the project manager to select the appropriate outputs. While a minimum number of outputs are mandatory, the manager must select others appropriate to the individual project.

A third value is that of accountability. The last phase of the Standards, the Evaluation Phase, includes a post-

implementation review to ensure that the project has met its requirements and to learn how the application development standards can be improved. Starting in FY 2003, once the ALCS have been in place for a year, all IT projects will be reviewed internally by DIT business and technical staff. In addition, the Fairfax County Internal Auditors will review randomly selected projects.

Description of the Standards

The eight phases of the Fairfax County Application Life Cycle are:

1. Preliminary Plan
2. Define Requirements
3. Design
4. Develop
5. Test
6. Implement
7. Support
8. Evaluate

Each phase contains multiple steps. Each step has one or more outputs. In the Design phase, for example, the step Design Technical Architecture has five outputs, two of which are: Check list for Technical Architecture Installation and Network Infrastructure Plan. The outputs are the deliverables of this document. The description of each output includes its purpose, content, recommended techniques and tools, and, where appropriate, a sample.

The first step in following the Application Life Cycle Standards is for the project managers, both technical project manager and user project manager, to complete a check list selecting which outputs are relevant to their project. A core set of outputs is being made mandatory for the different types of development. For example, for Web development, project managers must complete the following:

- Project management plan [Outputs 1.2.1, 2.6.1]
- Statement of scope [Outputs 1.2.2]
- User requirements [Outputs 2.7.1]
- A data model (if there is a database) {Outputs 2.3.1, 3.2.1}
- A process model [Outputs 2.1.1, 2.2.1, 3.1.1]
- And a test plan [Outputs 5.1.1]

The project manager's Branch Chief and Division Director approve the completed outputs.

In addition to the eight phases described above, the Web site contains the Checklist and a Glossary of terms used in the Standards, and an Introduction. The Glossary facilitates the use of the Standards by the user staff involved in application development. The Introduction covers how to access and use this document. It includes: the purpose of the standards, what they are to be used for and how to use them, a suggested sequence for completion, recommended input documents and a sample of available commercial tools. The Introduction also contains a checklist of all the outputs from which project managers will select those relevant to their project. Because of the variation of size, type and platforms of applications, the DIT and user agencies' Project Managers start the development of the application by selecting outputs applicable to that particular project. The selections are scrutinized and approved by both DIT and user agencies' management.

The standards can be found on the Fairfax County Web Site on the Department of Information Technology Main page at the following address:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/dit/alcs.htm

Continuous Improvement of the Application Life Cycle Standards

The Application Life Cycle Standards form the basis for making the development of applications in Fairfax County a consistent, repeatable process. The ALCS provides a framework for application developers as to what are the important procedures necessary to complete an application.

Using ALCS as a starting point, the Architecture and Planning Division of DIT is leading the effort to formulate a methodology as to not only what procedures should be followed, but also how they should be executed. The methodology will expand upon this. A working group representing all of the department's Divisions has been formed to formulate a standard methodology as to how outputs should be completed. Each year, staff will go through a process of review and refinements to the ALCS as necessitated. Ensuring the quality of applications is to have consistent and all encompassing standards that apply to all phases of application development. The Architecture and Planning Division integrate the application development process standards, and the technology architectural standards that affect the development of systems. This includes identification of which standards need to be updated and where new standards need to be developed.

4.5 IT PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Managing an information technology project to successful completion, on time and within budget, is extremely challenging, even for experienced IT professionals. Successful completion of such a project is dependent upon project managers possessing not only knowledge and understanding of the highly technical aspects of an information technology project but also the skills associated with managing projects in a dynamic environment. The importance of effective management of information technology projects in the County has long been recognized as critical to delivering a high quality product. An IT Project Management position series is included within the County's personnel classification system.

During the late 1980's and early 1990's the County's



internal auditor's office conducted several audits of information technology projects, and recommended that the County:

Establish a Countywide IT Project management-training program in consultation with IT Project Management professionals. Provide training to both DIT and agency personnel prior to undertaking extensive IT projects." AND "—establish industry approved guide-lines for assignment

to the role of IT project manager.

This need was further highlighted in late 1996 in a consultant's report released on December 17, 1996 entitled, "Renewing Fairfax County: An Organization and Staffing Evaluation of Fairfax County Government." On March 7, 1997, the Acting County Executive's response to the Board of Supervisors about the study

included:

- (1) *"The DIT will establish an Information Technology (IT) Project Manager training and certification program within 3 months — with certification of a cadre of IT Project Managers within 6 months." AND*
- (2) *"DIT and agency personnel would not be assigned project management responsibilities until certification requirements have been completed. Curricula will include classroom and on-the-job training elements."*

In early 1997, the Department of Information Technology (DIT) reviewed other organizations' project management practices and conducted a survey of County information technology managers to determine the type of knowledge and skills needed to enable County staff to function effectively as project managers. Based upon the results of the review and survey, a County project management program and course was designed and implemented.

In 2001, the County's IT Project Management program was redesigned to include the project management core competencies included in the Project Management Institute's (PMI) body of knowledge. PMI is the professional credentialing organization for project management professionals.

Fairfax County's new ITPM program has incorporated current industry approved ITPM practices to ensure sound high quality project outcomes. Additional enhancements are made each year as technology evolves. Additional focus has been placed on managing risks and measurement.

The new and improved training program consists of eighty eight (88) hours (11days) delivered over the course of 8 weeks by County staff and a project management professional. The overall objective of the IT Project Management course is to provide IT project managers with a foundation in basic project management concepts, principles, and practices to effectively and efficiently manage IT projects.

The core content areas covered are:

- IT Project Management Fundamentals
- Project Leadership and Communication
- IT Project Plan Development
- Microsoft Project 2000
- Information Systems' Infrastructure and Architecture and Application Development

- Project Budgeting and Cost Management
- Project Requirements Development
- Project Procurement and Contract Management
- Project Reporting
- Best Practices and Lessons Learned

Training is provided to those individuals who are currently, or will soon be managing an information technology project. Staff are identified by their agency director and selected through a formal nomination process. The training program is currently institutionalized and is normally conducted twice a year. Approximately one hundred fifteen (115) local governments IT professionals have completed the program and met certification requirements.

The Fairfax County IT Project Management Certification is awarded to participants in recognition of full participation in the ITPM course. The County's certification is customized for its IT Project Management operations. Certification is based upon class participation and achievement of the course objectives. The project manager should acquire a clearly defined set of core competencies related to ITPM by attending all IT project management classes in their entirety. This includes the successful completion of a hands-on Microsoft Project 2000 desktop training course. Certification in IT Project Management is the basic requirement for managing all levels of IT projects in Fairfax County. Once certified, an individual is given direct responsibility and authority for all phases of the project management process from initiation to closure.

Project management success is the completion of IT projects that are delivered to customers in the allocated time period, within the budgeted cost, and at the user's specified performance level. The use of effective project management skills is critical to the successful completion of IT projects. The County's IT Project Management training program provides the methodology for achieving high quality IT results utilizing County and contracted resources effectively and efficiently.

The County's increased focus on providing training and certification in the application of project management techniques to information technology projects is a critical and proactive effort directed at ensuring successful application of information technology to assist the County in meeting the needs of its citizens in the 21st Century and beyond.

Technical compliance initiatives required to support automated process in agencies that are covered under HIPAA are developed in collaboration with the Department of Information Technology. The IT Security Officer, as well as IT managers in communications technologies and applications support, develop and execute the IT compliance requirements. Some agencies may submit projects that enhance service efficiencies but must have special HIPAA compliant infrastructures developed. The on-going investments in infrastructure refresh and new systems will be implemented HIPAA compliant.

